

ETC Communication Committee Recommendations

2/21/2013

The role of the Communications Committee is to identify communications needs and recommend strategies to City staff. The Committee also acts as a sounding board for work that is in process.

The Committee recommends the ETC forward the following recommendations to City Communications staff and the City Council.

Recommendations

- 1 Staff should develop comprehensive communication plans to address the following current transportation initiatives:
 - a **France Avenue Crossings Project.** This project requires an immediate and comprehensive communication effort.
 - b **Safe Routes to Schools Study.** This study is currently underway and will result in a SRTS plan. A communications plan should be prepared that focuses on the benefits of active transportation to school, city and school district collaboration, and role the SRTS plan will play in qualifying the city for future SRTS grants.
 - c **Living Streets.** This policy is still in development. A communications plan should communicate the benefits of a Living Streets policy and the connection of this policy to goals and objectives in Vision 20/20 and the Comprehensive Plan. It should place the city's Living Streets policy in context with county, regional, state, and federal transportation policy and industry best practices (engineering, planning, public health, etc.).
- 2 Staff should implement communication plans well in advance of policy adoption (such as in the case of Living Streets and SRTS) and project construction (such as in the case of France Avenue and other infrastructure projects). At the very least a successful plan should identify communication objectives, audiences, messages, media, spokespersons,

partners, etc. A successful communication effort should provide all stakeholders (internal and external) with an accurate and meaningful understanding of the initiative. At the very least stakeholders need to know:

- a What's the history for this initiative?
- b What were the critical issues?
- c What are the project goals?
- d What are the tangible benefits?
- e What are the project's costs?
- f What is the schedule?
- g What are the key milestones?
- h How will it benefit residents?
- i They should also have a vehicle for sharing feedback and getting answers to specific questions.

3 Other recommendations:

- a The Edina Police Department should be involved in communicating the rules about how to use various bike facilities around town. The idea of offering presentations, similar to the coyote presentations, has been discussed with Chief Long. The communications committee recommends pursuing this further.
- b We believe that the City should undertake an effort to help homeowners understand what transportation rights-of-way are and what is and isn't allowed within them. The City of Golden Valley has a helpful web page on this subject that may provide some insights about how we might proceed. See <http://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/streets/row/index.php>
- c Signage and road markings are critical to helping people understand how to use bike facilities. We recommend an effort to standardize all signage and road markings within the city in accordance with MN MUTCD and best practices. Placement of signs should be context sensitive, with unnecessary signs avoided.
- d The effectiveness of video programming as a means for communicating important city initiatives should be evaluated in light of low viewership and audience reach.
- e Finally, we recommend the City make an ongoing effort to communicate internally and to residents the City's vision for a fully integrated, multi-modal

transportation system that safely, conveniently and equitably serves all users (ages, abilities, and income levels) and modes (motorists, transit riders, bicyclists and pedestrians).